



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

Innovations for Successful Societies Oral History Project

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Interviewee: Neil Pouliot
Retired Chief Superintendent Royal Canadian Mounted
Police/Consultant

Interviewer: Arthur Boutellis

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BOUTELLIS: My name is Arthur Boutellis. I am an interviewer with the Institutions for Fragile States. I am now sitting with Neil Pouliot at the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Office, the Gendarmerie Royale du Canada, in Ottawa, Canada. Today is the 15th of January 2008. First, thank you very much for your time. Before we start the interview, could you please confirm that you've read, understood, and signed the informed consent and the legal release forms?

POULIOT: *I did read it, and I signed it.*

BOUTELLIS: Thank you very much. Let me start by asking a little bit more about your personal background and the different jobs you've held before overseas and how did you get involved into police reform work overseas?

POULIOT: *I joined the Mounted Police in 1962 from Niagara Falls, Canada. I did my training in Regina, Saskatchewan. Upon completion of my training in Saskatchewan, I was sent to northern Manitoba, a place called Thompson, where I was involved in uniform policing of the town of Thompson as well as the outlying areas of the city, and my mode of travel was by motor gas car on a railroad track.*

After five years there I was transferred to Montreal, where I participated in almost five years of drug investigations. From there I was transferred to Ottawa to the Canadian Police College, where I was course coordinator and lecturer for drug investigational techniques and counterfeit investigational techniques courses. Upon completion of that term, I was transferred to Regina, Saskatchewan, where I participated in white-collar crime investigations for three years. I was in charge of a drug squad in Regina for four years.

Upon completion of that task, I was commissioned and came to Ottawa as the officer in charge of national/international drug operations, and as such I was responsible for coordinating and participating in some international investigations in Canada, the United States, and some other countries around the world. As well during that time I was a resource person for the United Nations Division of Narcotics and Interpol and giving courses on drug investigational techniques, or parts of courses in drug investigational techniques in developing countries, in Africa and India, Malaysia as well. I participated in that program of drug investigations for six years, seven years. Then I was appointed the officer in charge of Security Offenses Branch, which is a part of the Criminal Intelligence Directorate here in Ottawa that overlooked terrorist activity and prosecuting cases involving terrorist activity such as Air India, that type of thing.

I did that for several years. Then I was appointed the Director of Criminal Intelligence Services Canada, which was responsible for coordinating intelligence throughout Canada through different police forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as well as internationally. During that time I participated in lectures around the world, the last one giving a presentation of police corruption in Beijing, China. I gave courses in Chile as well, dealing with the intelligence community, police responsibility, dealing with intelligence.

Why I took this job as Director of the U.N. Commission in Haiti? I had applied earlier. I always thought that I could maybe help in assisting a war-torn country if you want as I had been in a number of African countries, developing countries. I had applied for a job through the force in Cambodia I believe it was at the time but the government of Canada did not participate in that particular venture. When Haiti came open I applied for that and I was there for 17 months. I was there

initially as part of the reconnaissance team and arriving in Haiti much earlier than the mission and doing a reconnaissance of the country to establish what were the requirements of the country, manpower, the legal system, etc. Then we took over and I was there for over a year as the Canadian Commissioner of 21 different countries who participated in the mission.

BOUTELLIS: What were the exact dates, if I may ask, or just the year?

POULIOT: *I have it in my CV, but it's September 1994 I went to Haiti, and we had to prepare a report for the U.N. by December of 1994.*

BOUTELLIS: That's the reconnaissance mission.

POULIOT: *That was part of it, and it went in '95 as well. We took over; I believe it was May 1st or April 30th, 1995, from the multinational team that was already there.*

BOUTELLIS: Can you describe briefly the history, because you come with the reconnaissance team and you see really the first steps of that mission.

POULIOT: *Well, we weren't given any literature per se prior to getting there. When I knew I was going to be going to Haiti I went to the library and gathered as much literature as I could to read up on the status of the country, having known or heard about some of it in the past. When we were there we were to determine if it was a stable and safe environment and what was required to make a stable and safe environment. We went to I believe it was 120 of the 125 communes on the island and found that in most police stations, I would say 98% of all the police stations we visited there were no criminal codes, there were no documentations. Some of the things we saw there, the men, women and children were locked up in the same cells. Some of the crimes they had committed were not registered. Some of the officers when asked why these people were in jail they couldn't tell us. They couldn't tell us the names of some of these people.*

Another sideline that we found was that none of the prisoners were fed by the police or by the state. It was a requirement of the families to feed their own. That's pretty much of a common thing I found with many, many countries in Africa, especially with the Franco-Napoleonic law type countries. It was a family's responsibility to feed the prisoners. In any event, we found this in many, many places. Eventually when we came in the place we were able to get the government to make a separation of jails from the police and set up a directorate for the prisons that was answerable to the Minister quite separate from the police.

We were able to get food for the prisoners from an NGO at the time, the Bureau de Nutrition et Développement (BND). They supplied the food. We had to obtain it in Port-Au-Prince and deliver it to all the jails. We found out very shortly after we brought the food to the prisoners that half way through the month the food was gone. Then we asked the civilian police how come there's no food. What they were doing, they would gather the food at the beginning of the month and give it to the police at the police stations and the police ate the food as well with the prisoners. Therefore, the lack of food. Then we had to change our policies and dole out the food on a daily basis until things got corrected. These things don't correct themselves overnight. They don't correct themselves in a year. It takes a lot of time. As you know you can teach young people many, many things and they're enthusiastic to learn it, but the next phase is if they are placed with people who have been there a long time, they're not prepared to change their ideas. The young people will not change it. If the President of the country, the

Ministers are not prepared to change their ideologies, others won't change either. We're looking at a 200 year problem. The old saying is he who is in power grabs everything while he is there because tomorrow he may be gone.

That is I believe a problem in Haiti as well as many other developing countries in Africa and South America.

BOUTELLIS: Could you talk a little bit about the status of public order and crime when you first got there during your assessment mission?

POULIOT: *When we were first there, there was so much military—there were 25,000 troops in Haiti, most in Port-Au-Prince then. For the first four or five months there was no crime because there was so much military. But as the military began to get reduced and replaced by the U.N. multinational force crime started to go up. We found in many cases, because there was no legal system in place, the population took matters into their own hands. Either people were macheted to death or stoned to death or beaten to death by the general population. It seemed to be an acceptable thing.*

I go back to the fall of 1994 when the multinational forces came into Haiti. The people were lined up on the streets welcoming the soldiers. On the sidelines was the FAD'H (Haitian military). Who are the police to police the FAD'H? They were on the streets and people were cheering, crowding. The FAD'H turned around and beat these women back. This was on television, beat them back out of the way. The women were laughing. It seemed to be an accepted thing at that time that beatings from the military or those in authority was a common, accepted thing. So these are the things we saw. It's very hard to accept. You don't just go beating people; it's not the way to make things work. But those were some of the things.

There was no justice, as I say. The Chef d'instruction was the all-powerful person. If a body was found on the street nobody could move it until you got a judge d'instruction. In most cases in order to find a judge d'instruction—the phones weren't working—you had to find, get somebody to take you. It could take a whole day. In the meantime that body remained there. The animals start pecking at it, eating at it, the pigs, the dogs, the chickens. It's a common thing. What the police, before we arrived, these were things I heard, when someone was found in the street, the police will say, he's still a little bit alive, we'll take him to the hospital. As long as that person was still a little bit alive they'd take him to the hospital, but in essence the person was dead. But they thought in order for them to be presumed dead they would have to get a medical person to say that. As far as they were concerned they were still alive. But when multinational forces came it didn't happen, the body stayed on the street. Those are the types of things that are very real.

BOUTELLIS: Can you clarify for us, what was your mandate as you came in as Superintendent and Chief Commissioner in Haiti from '94 to '96, is that correct?

POULIOT: *I came in '94 but I didn't take over officially the United Nations mission until the 30th of April. The mandate became official on the 30th of April from the U.N.*

BOUTELLIS: In '95.

POULIOT: Yes.

BOUTELLIS: Then through '96.

POULIOT: *Then through '96.*

BOUTELLIS: Can you walk us through the initial state, what the mandate was, what the mission was on the police side of things.

POULIOT: *The mandate was to assist the government of Haiti in maintaining a safe and secure environment and to assist the government in elections and to assist in training a police force. However, the mandate for me as a police officer assisting the government of Haiti to maintain a safe and secure environment was very, very hazy. I sent a fax off to New York asking what details—in fact, I said if a Haitian was being beaten by fellow Haitians and local authorities did not step in, what was my authority? What are the authorities of the United Nations police? I felt that having been sent there by my government that if this was on television, Canadians would be very irate that we, the Mounted Police, would be standing by doing nothing.*

So the United Nations came back and told us that we could take a proactive action in arresting that person and turning over to a justice as soon as possible. The rules of engagement were all laid out, what we could do as far as firearms were concerned, the whole nine yards. So in essence, while we were there, we were doing the police with the existing interim public security force because when we took over, the FAD'H had been, many of the FAD'H had been accused of human-rights violations. They had been recorded by a number of embassies as well as the MICIVIH (Mission Civile Internationale en Haiti, the International Civilian Mission in Haiti) mission. So a lot of the FAD'H were vetted, were rejected, because of the human-rights violations.

While these people were being rejected they had to be given some kind of training to get them back into the workforce. Some of the training included training on computers, maintenance, mechanical maintenance. There was another one which slips my mind. But computer enhancements when three-quarters of the country has no power, they weren't good things. I think they were good intentions but they weren't good things. I mean, you demobilize these people, you have to give them real jobs that they can do and I don't think that that was really being done at that time. I think it was really more or less a pacifier because they were getting money as well for a few months after.

So the vetted FAD'H became the interim public security force. They were mixed in with Guantanamo Bay trainees. Those were people who had been picked up by ship. They were trying to get away from Haiti and were brought to Guantanamo Bay. So a lot of them were given police training of several months by ICITAP (International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program) and brought into the fold with the FAD'H and made the interim public security force. The stations were not equipped. Most of these officers had no guns; if they did they had no bullets. They were antiquated weapons. The communications systems of the police themselves didn't work, the plumbing didn't work, the toilets were nonexistent. The places were technically pig sties. We had to work with these people in these places. So some of the recommendations we made were to have the United Nations fix up these stations and fix up whatever we could to get it done.

There were contracts that had been laid out to fix certain places like Cap-Haitien or other cities. The work just didn't seem to get done. A lot of these workers, contractors, wanted to be paid up front before the work was done and in a lot of cases it wasn't done. So these were the situations we had to live in and work with

these people. Most of the time when we arrested them, during public demonstrations, etc, the interim public security force were falling down although some of them did do very good jobs, they tried with the training they were given. But they knew at the end of the day they were going to be replaced with the new police force because (Jean-Bertrand) Aristide did not want any people from the FAD'H in the police force. So they were going to be replaced.

We were placed with the dilemma that the first 700 police officers were going to graduate in June of 1995. We had to demobilize 700 of the interim public security force. Now we set up an evaluation system for the police officers done on a weekly basis at all the stations. We asked the CIVPOL (Civilian Police) to do these evaluations. Then they were brought into Port-Au-Prince where they were all evaluated and the worst 700 performers in all of Haiti, not one location, but all of Haiti, were to be demobilized. The list was given to the government of Haiti for their approval. They came back and refused a portion of the people that had been recommended to be demobilized. I asked them why and the answer from the government was that these people were Guantanamo Bay trainees and they were loyal to Aristide and they had to stay. Now these people, the reason why their performance appraisals were terrible is that they didn't show up for work, or if they came they were late, they wouldn't wear their uniforms. They were just very, very lazy and not really interested. Those were the type of people we refused.

Now, Mr. Aristide and his entourage had made recommendations or suggestions that they would keep all the Guantanamo Bay trainees and at the end of the day put them as presidential guards if you like, that type of thing. So that was the kind of dilemma we were faced with. Plus, other problems that crept up were the persons in charge of the administrative departments. I can't remember their official title, but there was a person in charge of each department, like each province or each state was appointed by Aristide. In many cases, the person had no police experience, no knowledge of the legal system, just an appointment. In one place, the Department of the South West (Jacmel), that gentleman took 40 new police recruits who were supposed to work with the population and made them his personal bodyguards.

The Japanese had donated 200 police vehicles, a number of fire trucks and ambulances. The Department of the Southwest had 14 police vehicles. This gentleman left two for the department, and the rest of them he took for himself and his 40 police officers, bodyguards. This was all recommended, reported, and given to Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi and when we had meetings with the President—we met with him twice a week—all these things we brought to him, shown to him, nothing changed.

BOUTELLIS: When you were reporting this back to headquarters in New York, what recommendations were made?

POULIOT: *From us? We had—.*

BOUTELLIS: From CIVPOL.

POULIOT: *I took my orders from Mr. Brahimi and we went to the President to get this changed. "We'll look at it, we'll look at it." Those types of questions, just like discipline. For example, another problem. We had, Canada, and this is a political thing, decided to give training to Haitians here in Regina, Saskatchewan. I can't remember the number but I think quite a few, a couple of hundred Haitians from the United States and Canada were sent to Saskatchewan for training. A lot of*

them, many of them were recommended not to go on, but because it was a political thing they had to stay. The only thing we could vet them on was a criminal record or national security record if we had any. That was the only clearance. We couldn't meet relatives, we couldn't meet friends, go to school records to find out what kind of individual this was. So these people were engaged at a very high salary in American dollars and brought back to Haiti during the time before the new police recruits came out, before they came out, and were housed with them at the same school they were getting training. We found out that these trained Canadian police officers, Haitians, were telling the Haitians, "You working for this? This is what we're getting." They were causing a lot of problems with the new recruits.

It turns out that a lot of these people, before the new recruits came out, were working for the government and they became members of SIN (Service Nationale d'Intelligence).

BOUTELLIS: The national intelligence service.

POULIOT: *SIN, remember that. A lot of these people were police officers during the day and they were sinning at night because what they started doing is they started kidnapping people, beating them up, threatening them. This came to light, we found out, in fact, a couple of times our new police officers were having gun exchanges. There were shots fired but nobody, thank goodness, no one was hit. So we went to see Aristide with Brahimi with all this in hand and SIN was dissolved. They were all taken out. But those were the types of things that come up on you.*

BOUTELLIS: So we already got into the issue of recruitment. Before we really go more in depth in the technical areas, I'd like maybe if you could walk us through the rest of your career, the last ten years since you've been in Haiti especially if you've had any other overseas involvement, in what capacity.

POULIOT: *Training in a lot of developing countries with Interpol, United Nations division for narcotics. Whether it's a two-week course—you give the developments, informants, investigational techniques, how to conduct searches, that type of thing. You give that session a couple of days. Some of them reenact it. As far as going beyond that, how they carry on in their own country, I don't know. I do know that in my experience in Senegal, I did a study of the airport there, the international airport, because they were saying it was a trans-shipment point. They had 16 members working there. So I had recommended to the Director of the National Police that perhaps they could have shift work, maybe three shifts so they could cover all the people coming in an out of the airport, or people coming in. The Director said to me, "Sir you have to understand that we're not paid very much here. In order to combat corruption we try to keep everybody working together so nobody can do anything without the others knowing it." A real story.*

In Slovakia where I spent a year I made recommendations to the country in how to implement methodologies in order to combat organized crime. That was involved in suggesting policies, basing myself always in the theaters of my country, how we did things and what happened when we did them in a certain way and recommending them to do it a different way, leaving the option to them.

I lectured the Criminal Operations Officer, which was number two in the police force as well as different commanders of each province in different enforcement groups, organized crime, drugs, that type of thing. On how we did things, the

informant development, the witness-protection program, undercover operations. How we do it, how it operates in our country and how it could possibly operate in their country. I delivered 65 presentations and papers while I was there in a year. They were all translated and put in the police library at the main training school in Bratislava. So my presentations were translated. Approximately one week before I got there my presentations were prepared and given to the persons who were going to translate. They were to read them. We were to meet two days before to discuss to see if they had any problems. For example, I said sometimes police have a tendency to cut corners, and the translator didn't understand what cutting corners was. So when I drew a four-cornered street and showed her instead of going this way they would take a short cut, then she understood and she said we have a term for that. So it is things like that that were very important that when you're presenting that the meaning is presented, not just the dialogue. That's probably a problem with a lot of missions, not understanding.

BOUTELLIS: Let's move on to more technical areas. What we're primarily interested in I think is your involvement in Haiti, but if you have any other relevant experience internationally in police reform, then we're happy—we can make comparisons and other things. As we've already touched on the recruitment issues, maybe I'd like to move on from recruitment to training and professionalization. In Haiti I was going to ask you if you could describe some of the training programs that you may have designed and if you started implementing them.

POULIOT: *The training programs were developed by ICITAP, the training programs at the school. There were Canadians delivering those programs, they were members of ICITAP but not part of my United Nations mission, they were separate and apart. However, what we did is we developed a field training guide based upon what they had learned at the academy. Now the objective of the field training guide I saw as three-fold. When the young officer came out of training he had a manual. Each officer had a training manual based on what he had learned. My CIVPOL officer was to accompany these young people, to see how they performed those duties that they had learned in the academy. If that officer or other officers were not meeting the criteria as laid out in the norm, the field training guide, then we knew we had a problem at the school.*

If the errors that that particular person was committing were not the same as the others, the others were not committing those errors, then the problem was with that young person and that had to be corrected. As the United Nations commander, it was important that I find out how my officers were participating with these people because they would have to make notes in this field training guide and it demanded a lot of them. A lot of them would have five, six or ten trainees under his watch. But that's what we're there for, to work. It wasn't a holiday. That's one of the things that we had done. That would have been four months because you had four months of training at the school and then a four-month field training guide.

It went along pretty good. I had resistance from some of the United Nations police officers because they thought it was labor intensive and it was demanding. But I had some that came after me and said, "Gosh, that's a wonderful thing, we should do that in our own country."

BOUTELLIS: What capacity did you have with CIVPOL to do this four months training in the field?

POULIOT: *I was a Commissioner in the United Nations police. So I had training officers working under me, training officers and administrative commander and a criminal*

operations commander. So those are the things that I put forward and had my staff develop in working with these people. Now a lot of these things were put in place before we actually took over the mission. . For example, the recruiting of Haitians to become police officers was criteria developed by my staff at the U.N. French-speaking members went out to interview people across the country along with members from ICITAP. But it was basically U.N. personnel working in conjunction with ICITAP and other agencies to get this thing going.

I think when you go on a mission you've got to take your ego and put it in your pocket. You have to work with everybody there in order to make the mission work. You're not there for yourself; you're there for the country. Sometimes people forget that. CIVPOL forgets it, the military forgets it, the administration staff in the United Nations forget it, and NGOs forget it. We're all there to work for achievement of the mission, the country. People have a hard time with their egos. But that's some of the things that we experience. For example, driver training was not taught in the training.

BOUTELLIS: In the academy, the ICITAP training.

POULIOT: *We're not talking about sophisticated training; there are no paved roads in Haiti, it's all pretty well goat trails, first gear, second gear, third gear. Anywhere else, above 40 kilometers would be a 30-minute drive. Sometimes we're looking at three hours in Haiti to get to some of these places. So we weren't talking about sophistication. Because my manpower was spread out—I had 900 officers spread out through 19 locations in Haiti, plus Port-Au-Prince had five or six offices in the city—my manpower was dispersed. I had to blend my people because not everybody was French-speaking, that was the other problem. Some of them were not even English-speaking. So that was another problem. So I had to put English and French and people who spoke Spanish and different languages together. For example I was fortunate enough that I had Canadians that spoke English, French and Spanish, so I put them along the Dominican Republic border along with some of the Argentineans and some other nationalities who spoke maybe French or English. But you've got to remember I had 147 Jordanians, very few spoke English or French. I think I had one Jordanian who spoke French, maybe half a dozen spoke English. The same with the Argentineans, two spoke French, one spoke English, the rest was all Spanish. The Pakistanis, a couple spoke English, the rest no.*

BOUTELLIS: So how did you work with them?

POULIOT: *What I did is, my mission—for example, one mission I had Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, Jordanians, French and some English. So my orders always left the station in both English and French. So in this case here it went to the French—I had Algerians. That's what it was, I had French who spoke to the Algerians in French. The Algerian spoke to the Jordanian in Arab. The Jordanian spoke to the Bangladeshi in English. That's how we tried to make things work. It wasn't always perfect but that's how we had to make it work. As I said, you had to blend your weaknesses and strengths together to get a product that was the same across the country. Those were some of the things we had to live with.*

Now, as far as the training aspect, when I left February 29, 1996, I was replaced by another country. The first thing they did was no more field-training guide. All the training was to be done from the stations. So how do you monitor a young officer in a station for his weaknesses and strengths based on a training guide? So that's why I think some of that started falling apart.

BOUTELLIS: Was that a personal initiative? Was there some kind of handover between you and your successor? Were there guidelines?

POULIOT: *Guidelines, that's what I'm frustrated with. All this that I did, or my team did, was sent to the U.N., who had sanctioned it. A new commissioner comes along and he changes it at his whim, as I can see it. The continuity is not there. That's not the way we do things in my country. Not many countries do this field service training which I think is a very, very good way to get things done.*

So that was one thing about training. I know I went and participated in giving management courses to some of the senior officers in the new police force, but you've got to remember, some of these senior police officers were very young. They were promoted as the result of exams. Experience was very, very minute, because they were all new police officers. There were no seasoned officers there to look after them; the only seasoned officers were the U.N. Some of that sometimes was questionable, too. I'll give you an example.

Before a new police force came in, we were doing the interim public security force. One of—someone had been arrested. A Haitian national had been arrested. The interim public security force, the former FAD'H, were giving this guy a licking. One of my U.N. officers, who was an observer and a trainer, was in the office sitting there looking and saying nothing. The commanding officer for the Port-Au-Prince happened to come into the station because he roved around unannounced. He came into the station, he saw what was happening. He stopped it and he asked the U.N. police officer, why didn't you do anything? He said, "It's no different from home." You've got to remember, the U.N. asked for police officers from democratic countries. What is democratic to me and democratic to you may not be totally democratic to some of these other people. But a lot of these countries apply and they get the job.

There are a couple of factors here I want to point out. When military and police are deployed on mission, the U.N. pays a big chunk of money to the contributing country per month. It's a big business for some of these countries, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India. It's a big business. That's why they're so ready to supply manpower. You get a lot from developing countries. I had a contingent of twenty officers, they came in from Guinea-Bissau. Didn't speak English, didn't speak French. They arrived with no uniforms and no firearms and I was supposed to take these people in. Already there was a handicap. I had to put them out, I couldn't put them in Port-Au-Prince all the time. By the time I got everything done to get them back out of there it took a month. I had to get them to the United Nations, they go back to the country. It took a month to get them out. While they're there to get them to do something but my officers are saying they'd rather not go out, they can't do anything, they can't speak the language, we can't speak to them. They had their backs up. But those are real things that happen.

BOUTELLIS: If I can come back to the training for a moment, because you're involved mainly in the field, the follow-up training in the field. You mentioned driving as one of the categories.

POULIOT: *The driving wasn't done at the academy. I got the military. I spoke to the general and asked them to give training to my police officers. He said he'd be happy to do that. I got some of my police officers saying, "Why are you doing this?" And I'm saying to get them training on how to drive. We're not talking about pulling people over; we're just talking about getting people to drive. I said, look, 5% of the police force can drive; only 5% of the police force can drive. We have to have*

drivers. We can't have this same 5% be working all the time, because that's what was starting to happen. So that was one of the things.

The other thing was I had the military do a study on the communications system. Again, resistance from within. Why can't that be a police responsibility? You mean communications is a police responsibility? Come on. So I got them to do recommendations and to—because there had been police communications in that country before, it was all broken down. I said, "Let's get a study done, maybe we can get some of these things fixed and it will work for what we need and what we have, just like the plumbing." Fix the stations up, we don't have to build new stations, let's fix them up, clean them up and they'll have someplace to go, have maintenance.

That's another thing, maintenance. That seems to be a word that doesn't exist in Haiti or in other developing countries, maintenance. It seems to have been removed from everybody's vocabulary. Things are always broken down. So those were some of the things. Management courses, some of the officers— .

BOUTELLIS: When we talk about internal management, that's another category, we talk about promotion system, disciplinary system, record keeping, accounting and so on. Can you tell us a little bit more about the instances where you assisted the Haitian police in developing this?

POULIOT: *The internal discipline. That was another major problem where incidents had been reported regarding the conduct of the interim public security force, later some of the palace guards and the new police. It was all documented for the Ministry of Justice to take action.*

Another problem with discipline. The police stations were responsible for licensing vehicles. In a couple of places some of the new vehicles the country got or received, the police replaced the police license plates with private license plates and started using the vehicles for their families. This was reported again to take action by the government. Very, very slow. By the time I left many of the problems of discipline had now been resolved. I think that we have to have a mechanism in place that when something happens you want the host country to be responsible and to take an action, but if they don't, then the U.N. should be empowered to do something or the organization should be empowered to take the necessary action like they would in their own country. The United Nations has to have some kind of a court set up in order to do that as they would in their own country. It's not something that is going to take—if you have—if an improper action occurs and you sit on it and do nothing, it only encourages the others to do the same because they don't know action will be taken. When there is a disciplinary problem, it has to be acted upon quickly. The rest of the rank and file have to see that an action has been taken, that it will not be tolerated. Because when you start tolerating it, it opens doors to other misdeeds.

BOUTELLIS: You said there needs to be a mechanism. Is that something you tried in the field?

POULIOT: *No, I never tried it because I wasn't there long enough to get that in place. You're just trying to keep things going. Having been new at the U.N. if you want, on the DPKO side was an experience in itself. I had to demobilize starting in November of '95, I had to demobilize 900 officers down to 300 because the mission was coming up on the 29th of February 1996 for extension, but I had to reduce it. So plans were put in place to reduce it down to 300 by February. One of my recommendations was that we charter an aircraft and take the Pakistanis, the Jordanians, the Bangladeshis and the Nepalese on one flight. I got resistance*

from that from New York. I said, "Why can't we do this? We're going to save the United Nations a lot of money. If they go commercially from Haiti, they'll go to the United States. From the United States they have to go to Britain or France. A lot of these countries they're going to have to have visas and we're going to have to pay for those things."

I said, "If we do one flight, we leave Haiti. We go to Jordan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal." Well, you know what the bottom line was, I finally got it out of them; they had never done it before. So they were afraid to ask. They finally got the plane, they got the plane but I had to keep at it. But this was how I had to do long-term planning and keep only the French-speaking members in and things like that.

BOUTELLIS: So it actually happened, there was this plane?

POULIOT: *Oh, yes, I got the plane, took all these people on in one trip.*

BOUTELLIS: With the story of the plane it makes me come back to another question of possible—all these training initiatives and police reform in general in this country costs a lot of money. This is one instance in which you had a cost-saving opportunity, right?

POULIOT: Yes.

BOUTELLIS: Maybe you mentioned also the involvement of the military in part of the training which may also have saved money.

POULIOT: *It did, very much so.*

BOUTELLIS: Do you have any other examples you can think of?

POULIOT: *My office, as U.N. commissioner, I did not have any authorization to spend ten cents, to buy a stamp, to send a letter to the United Nations, etc. My officers would get a flat tire somewhere along the road. They could stop there and get one of these fellows along the road, there were lots of them, repair the tire right away and pay whatever, 10 gourdes, 15 gourdes, whatever it was. They would come into Cap-Haitien where there was an administrative office. They'd put it in to the administrative officer and if he hadn't approved it, they wouldn't get paid. In some cases they refused to pay it because they couldn't reach him, didn't contact them. That was the kind of thing, financial delegation has to be given to the commissioner and to the U.N. military commander. I'm not asking for a lot of money but operationally to make things happen quickly. So if a fellow gets a flat tire, gets it fixed, has a receipt, you send it in. If there is a pattern of continuous flat tires then maybe there's a problem with the person that we have to look at, but you have to have a bit of risk management on that. But to have an administration officer outside of the norms and put him out in the country for this type of thing, we're wasting a lot of money that could be generated somewhere else to make the mission work.*

BOUTELLIS: Any reflection on thinking of ways to enhance accountability, external accountability and effectiveness? Accountability to the community but also to policy makers for the police?

POULIOT: *Another thing we had working was community-based policing. We had started that concept. The Canadians had that in place from our own country. The majority of the contributing countries were not involved in that type of policing.*

When you talk about accountability, you're accountable to the area you police because you're having different people participate and you're asking for different things to be looked after. I'm not saying they're responsible for your performance, that's the commissioner's job, to make sure that happens and the police force has a commissioner, etc. So there are mechanisms to check how these things happen and what's going on. That didn't happen because again, when I left, the idea of community-based policing was thrown out the window because people didn't want it done. The new commissioner stopped that as well. So the walks through the market, the biking through the markets which had never happened before, had begun with the interim public security force and stayed with the new police force.

Putting things in place, the commissioner has to have, if you want, the United Nations commissioner has to have more authority. I guess what I'm saying is, before a commissioner or Chief of Police of the home country is put into place, perhaps the United Nations commissioner should be in charge of the police for four or five years to get it going, to make sure it's going and working.

BOUTELLIS: Should be in charge of the national police, with an executive mandate?

POULIOT: *Yes, the national police has to be, not controlled, but managed by someone who has been there before, has the worldly experience of managing people and getting things done and done right. It has to be done by someone I think outside of the home country. I think that's the mistake we're making in a lot of areas, a lot of countries. That's what I believe.*

BOUTELLIS: Since then there have been more examples of this executive mandate, like in Sierra Leone or Kosovo.

POULIOT: *If you'd like I can give you some stuff on community-based policing. I can send it to you by e-mail, the programs we had in place.*

BOUTELLIS: Linked, maybe related to this in some ways, it is often said that a politically-neutral police is quite important. What was your experience of maybe depoliticizing the national police?

POULIOT: *Mr. Aristide felt that the FAD'H were the remnants of Papa Doc (François Duvalier) and Baby Doc (Jean-Claude Duvalier). If he allowed all of them to stay that he would be overthrown. I think a lot of them yes, were removed. But I think there were some very, very good people that should have remained after the vetting. There were good managers and they got things done and they knew what had to be done. Whereas a lot of our young officers hadn't walked the talk. They got their heads inflated and the authority went with it too. That's the problem with some of these things, you have to have people who have been there and have to stay there for four or five years to get them going. I know it's going to ask a lot of the individual who would be chairing that, but if he knew after five years he would be on his way, the job would get done and I think get done well.*

BOUTELLIS: Taking a step back now, we've talked about different technical areas, I'd like to ask you about the broader challenges with police reform. Are there any specific tasks, from your experience that you think should be done in priority when looking at reforming national police, re-forming, from your experience.

POULIOT: *Well, it's not just the police, it goes all the way up to the top spectrum. They have to be trained as well, be it the President, the Minister of Justice, they have to be*

on board. Their real true color has to be forthcoming. If they don't change, if they're not prepared to change their attitudes and culture, then it doesn't matter what we do in the police or justice system it will never change because those people will set the tone. I'm convinced. If they will change, rank and file will change. And Mr. (René) Préval, when he became President, attempted to change a number of things. But the Senate and the Commons were all Lavalas (Fanmi Lavalas), Aristide followers.

Aristide told them to vote against whatever it was that Préval put forward. Préval never passed one thing while he was there. He tried to take the government out of the sugar business and stuff like that, and he wanted to privatize it. While Aristide was there or on the sidelines, it never passed. So what I'm trying to say is if the culture, the mentality doesn't change, nothing else is going to change. They put in two Directors of Policing: disaster. One looked after himself, set up his own security system for the rich.

BOUTELLIS: Now moving away from the national police I'd like to come back to something you've already started talking about as we were talking about Haiti, the actual U.N. police. I'd like to ask you if you had maybe some recommendations for improving recruitment and finding the right match of skills for the mission.

POULIOT: *First of all there is an excellent book that has been written by the Red Cross, To Serve & To Protect. That should be a requirement to be read. The police officers should be tested on that. Now, don't make a standard test, I think the tests have to be changed every time that there is going to be one so that you can avoid the problems that you may anticipate. A lot of police forces do not have a Code of Conduct. The United Nations passed a Code of Conduct in 1979, eight articles. I'll send that to you too. That would be a big starting point. Those eight articles should be part of the training for anybody coming on mission in their own country. It has been translated in six official languages, English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Arab and Russian. So it is available. The home country—it should be a requirement. Whether they do it? How do we check it? I don't know. That's the other thing. How are we going to check if these people have been trained or understand a Code of Conduct? Are we going to wait until they come on mission? Do we send people out? That's costly too. So how do we do this? How do we correct this?*

Maybe by long-distance learning, by the Internet? That's an answer. I'm not sure, but how do we apply it and how do we test it. Those are the type of things that we have to understand. That in my mind is one of the things that has to be taught. As I mentioned to you, the contributing nations, watching this guy getting hit, beaten up, he said, "that's normal in my country." So when you're drawing—you don't have a choice, you have to take what's given to you and those become your police officers. But one of the things to overcome some of the difficulties is to blend your forces. What I mean by blend, you mix them all up, you don't allow the Argentineans to be together. The military worked in contingents because that's how they operate. We're dealing day-to-day with a general population. They look to us for leadership in a lot of cases, and examples. So it is important that you kind of mix your contingents.

Of course, I mixed them for the language aspects to make sure they understood. I'm sure that a lot of these different countries do rub off on each other, how we do things. I would hope that the best would be related back to the police forces back home.

BOUTELLIS: Are there any innovations or experiments that you know about or that you've actually implemented yourself while you were in Haiti that we haven't talked about and that you think merit attention? Things potentially that could be transferred? Also if any of those initiatives maybe were homegrown?

POULIOT: *I mentioned the field service training; I think that's very, very important. Another is the community-based policing aspect. We expect our officers to live amongst the population in the mission. In Haiti I had certain contingents that went and lived away from the community; I mean miles away, an hour, hour and a half away, Club Med type of thing. They're there just for the money and couldn't care less about the country. That has to be one of the things that should be engrained; you will live among the community in order to be seen as part of the community, not away from it. I think that is a very important aspect and I don't think enough is said about that.*

I know that different parts of the world are more hot than others. I think you have to adjust to that situation.

BOUTELLIS: Security effectiveness.

POULIOT: *Yes. But generally, generally, I think if we're going to try to get policing done we, the U.N., have to live amongst the population to show examples. Because we're going to get involved in doing different things, coaching kids. It's part of our, part of the things we do or we should do. I had a program in Haiti with soccer and I got equipment sent from Canada, used equipment, but we sent it to all of the places and kids could have this stuff. Getting the kids involved, coaching, the police were doing the coaching, police were doing the referring and we were doing exhibition games, that type of thing.*

We had insurance investigators come to Haiti and saw us and wanted to go to different places so they could talk to people because of this situation.

BOUTELLIS: Before we wrap up are there any specific points that we haven't touched on that you'd like to come back to? Maybe, if you had to write a handbook, we talked about a lot of these things, what are some general thoughts or maybe even topics that you would consider most important for future U.N. commissioners?

POULIOT: *Code of Conduct, that is a basic requirement. Understanding the legal systems of the world. We come from common law, some people come from Napoleonic Code, continental law, Shariah, all different. I think the people coming—any police officer coming to a mission should understand that. Whether he is from Canada, Jordan, Bangladesh, he should understand the different concepts of law of the officers he will be working with and he should understand as well what is the legal system that is going to be in place in that particular country. So he will have his mind tuned into that. I think it is very important that he understand that. That I think is one of the—not downfall—but it would simplify that person's work a little more. The concept of community-based policing, I think that has to be put in. A lot of people don't believe in it, but if you want the people on site to understand, you have to be involved with them. But officers definitely have to know the Code of Conduct, and human rights. That book, *To Serve and To Protect*, that is all in there, humanitarian law, human rights, etc. It's a very good book for police.*

BOUTELLIS: Neil Pouliot, thank you very much for your time and your thoughts.